



ROBERT S. KERR, '16

Genial Bob Kerr, Democratic nominee for governor of Oklahoma, exhibits the much-photographed broad grin which was one of his campaign assets. Refreshed by a couple of fishing trips in August, Mr. Kerr said he would await the general election in November before talking much about his plans.

Next Governor

By OTIS SULLIVANT, '24

OKLAHOMA has good prospects for a peaceful, business-like state administration for four years with big, genial Robert S. Kerr, '16, the governor.

Mr. Kerr will be a friendly governor. He wants to avoid personal political battles and strife caused by prejudices, dislikes and punishment of political enemies. His administration will be keyed for maximum aid in the war effort, with the course of the administration fitting the necessities of war.

"When my term is over, I want to be known as a friendly governor and go out

of office with the friends I now have and many more made during the four years," said Mr. Kerr.

He realizes a man in the executive office will be imposed upon by friends instead of enemies. One of the prerequisites of a successful administration is for the chief executive to say "no" and mean it. Otherwise, he will be swamped by the demands of patronage, special and selfish interests and individuals and communities whose requests cannot be granted. Mr. Kerr has demonstrated ability to put the ring of finality in a quiet

"no" in dealing with politicians in preliminaries for organization of the House and Senate of the next legislature since he was nominated for governor by the Democrats at the July 14 primary election. He believes a governor can be firm and make decisions final without losing friends or making enemies.

Mr. Kerr's friendly attitude will extend to the University of Oklahoma and other educational institutions of the state. A former student at the University, Mr. Kerr has no plans for the University other than to aid in its program as it fits in the state financial picture in wartime. He has no ax to grind with the administration and faculty. The University authorities will not have to worry about interference from the Statehouse or a desire to punish anyone.

The nominee advocates modification of the constitutional amendment creating the State Regents for Higher Education, commonly known as the co-ordinating board. His platform called for repeal of the amendment voted in March, 1941, but Mr. Kerr modified it. He proposes to restore full power to control appropriations to the legislature instead of providing for lump appropriations to be allocated by the regents. A leeway of 10 to 15 per cent may be allowed to give the board limited control over appropriations and the board would retain full authority, otherwise, for co-ordinating the system of higher education.

As the Democratic nomination is equivalent to election, Mr. Kerr will be elected at the general election November 3 unless an unheard of political upheaval develops to give victory to his Republican opponent, W. J. Otjen, Enid. Barring the unforeseen, Mr. Kerr will be inaugurated January 11 to succeed Governor Phillips.

Robert S. Kerr will be the first native son elected governor. He was born September 11, 1896, in a log cabin 2½ miles southeast of Ada. He attended common schools at Ada, Oklahoma Baptist University at Shawnee in 1911-12, finished East Central State College at Ada in the summer of 1915, and attended the University of Oklahoma in 1915-16.

The incoming governor's background at various stages includes: farm boy, country school teacher, soldier in World War I, attorney and successful drilling contractor and independent oil operator. He is a former president of the Kansas-Oklahoma division of the Mid-Continent Oil and Gas association. He engaged in many civic activities. He has been commander of the Ada post of the American Legion, state commander of the Legion, twice chairman of the Infantile Paralysis Drive, active in Community Fund drives, Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association campaigns and other civic activities, first at Ada and later at Oklahoma City.

Mr. Kerr was fired with ambition to be governor when a small boy. His father

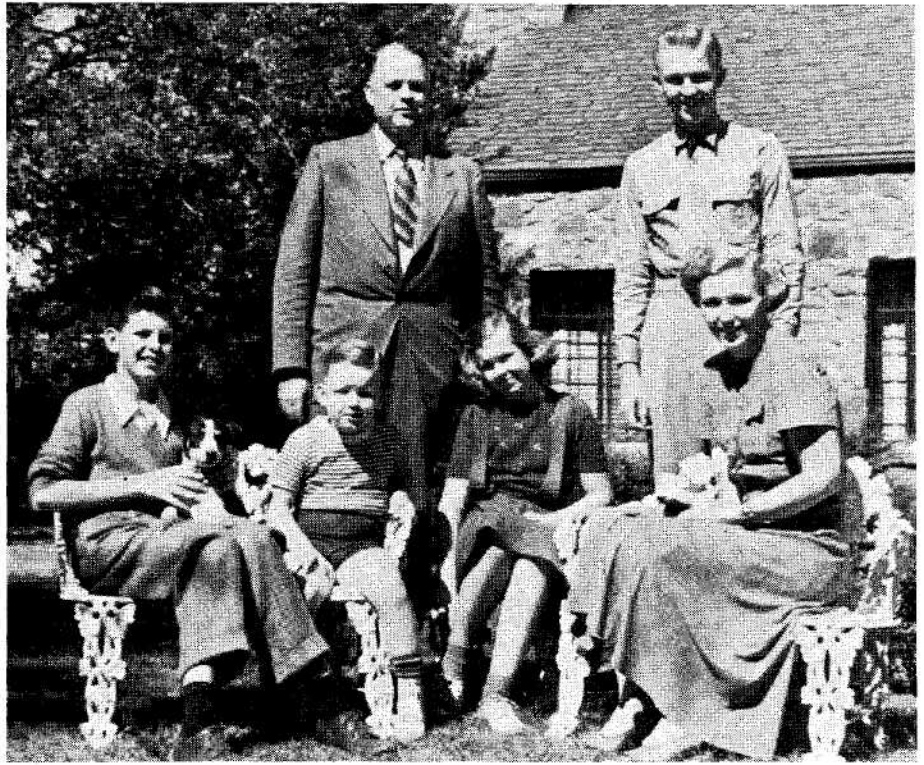
er, William Samuel Kerr, thought his son should be governor, and Bob thought so too. Sam Kerr was a great admirer of William Jennings Bryan and Bob Kerr has been an ardent Democrat from boyhood.

Few of Mr. Kerr's friends knew until four years ago that he entertained the ambition. When he first told of his plans, most of his friends shook their heads at the chances of a wealthy oil man's becoming governor of Oklahoma. Too many voters in the rural sections were prejudiced against an oil man and too much demagoguery swayed the voters in campaigns. Bob Kerr was undaunted. He didn't think of himself as a wealthy oil man and he didn't act as if he were one. He knew and liked people.

His first big step in politics was in 1940 when he was elected Democratic national committeeman. The position had not been a stepping stone toward the governorship. Mr. Kerr made it one. A conservative by business and association, he went all-out for President Roosevelt and the New Deal, especially on the president's foreign policies. He led the campaign in the state in 1940. He lost many friends among his business associates but endeared himself to the party faithful.

A big, strapping man, Bob Kerr's genial personality was one of his biggest assets in winning the nomination. He stands well over six feet and weighs 243 pounds. He makes friends in all ranks and is at home in any company. He can talk the language of the farmer or laborer or the big business executive. He has a genuine enthusiasm for people, a friendliness that is real, and people like him.

Mr. Kerr has a boyish enthusiasm for work or play. He loves a good story as



KERR FAMILY AT HOME

The Kerr family posed on the lawn at their Oklahoma City home includes Mr. Kerr and Bob, Jr., (standing) and Breene Mitchell, William Graycen, Grayce Kay and Mrs. Kerr, who played an active part in her husband's campaign.

well as anyone. He can swap yarns at a political meeting, with ministers or in a fishing boat. He loves the fanfare of American politics and is steeped in traditions and customs. He is a great admirer of Bob and Alf Taylor, brother governors of Tennessee, and the war of roses between the brothers for the governorship of Tennessee might have been the inspiration for his own type of campaign and attitude toward the public.

The nominee's hobby is fishing. It is his recreation and he looks forward to vacation days each summer. His fishing trips to Minnesota have attracted much attention, first because Governor Phillips failed to show up at a party four years ago after Bob Kerr played a vital part in nominating him, and because of his own party this year. He has invited friends to Minnesota for years.

It is real sport for him. He goes fishing to fish and not for politics. He loves to have a group with him, and show the laggards how to catch fish. He works hard at it. He fishes entirely for wall-eyed pike in the deep blue waters of the Minnesota lakes. His love of fishing dates back nearly 35 years when Sam Kerr used to load his family into a wagon after the crops were laid by for a trip to Sandy, Blue River, Little River or the Canadian River. Bob Kerr learned to fish with a pole and line and worms for bait on those Oklahoma streams. Since he became successful in the oil industry and owns a camp on Pelican lake, near Nisswa, Minnesota, he stays with still fishing for wall-

eye. He has never gone in for casting and fly fishing.

Mr. Kerr loves to play games, including checkers, bridge, cribbage and all card games. He plays with enthusiasm and usually wins.

The nominee is an ardent church member. He has taught a Bible class in the First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City for eight years. He will continue to teach it while in office. He is dry politically and personally. He never takes a drink of liquor and doesn't think a public official should drink. He believes a leader in government, church or school should abstain from the use of intoxicants because of the responsibility of position. However, he is not a prude about the other fellow's drinking if it is his own business. The dries have a champion in Bob Kerr and the wets cannot expect aid from the governor while he is in office.

The course of Bob Kerr's administration likely will be somewhere between that of Governor Phillips and his predecessor, the late E. W. Marland. The new governor will not face the serious problems of budget balancing to put the state on a cash basis and start it on the road out of debt. The necessity of belt-tightening by the state to aid business and the citizenship to meet demands of a nation at war eliminates the possibility of experiment in social questions and the loose administration and lavish expenditure of state funds usually present in such an administration.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)



BOB KERR CHUCKLES

The Kerr grin accounts for the nominee's being dubbed "Smiling Bob."

Next Governor

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

Political history of Oklahoma teaches that a man elected governor is at the crest of his popularity after the general election and before the inaugural. This is because of the demands from every quarter and the inability of the governor to see everyone and satisfy all requests after his inauguration. It is difficult to predict the course of an administration as each governor meets unexpected economic, social and political conditions. A governor may start with the best intentions and soon be frustrated by lack of knowledge and driving power, or by opposition from various quarters. Too often a governor loses his balance and perspective, and allows prejudices and hates to overshadow the accomplishments of his administration. Bob Kerr, the nominee and governor, cannot retain the perspective of Bob Kerr the oil man and candidate, but he has experience to teach him to go beyond the governor's office. The governor is forced to see too many persons who want something and want to say things to please him.

"I am fully conscious of the fact that the war may last throughout the next administration," says Mr. Kerr. "The course of the administration, like the course of the state and lives of the people, will have to conform to the necessities of wartime."

Mr. Kerr thinks he will strike a happy medium between the administrations of Phillips and Marland in relations with the public and other departments of state. He thinks the Phillips administration can be outdone in economical administration, and that personal controversies can be avoided.

"I sincerely believe we can set a pattern in economy of public funds that will be more efficient," he said. "We can cut the cloth to fit the pattern. The necessities can be met without increased taxation."

With the approval and direction of Mr. Kerr, the Democratic nominees for the House and Senate have made their choice for organization of the next legislature. It will open with the new governor in control. Tom Anglin, Holdenville, state senator, will be president pro tempore of the senate and Harold Freeman, '25, Paul's Valley, will be speaker of the house.

Mr. Kerr and his advisers believe a short session of the legislature is possible because of the war and the temper of the public. Actually, few major state questions are to be solved. The fiscal affairs will need attention, but they might not be serious. A surplus of more than \$5,000,000 in the general fund was left at the close of the fiscal year, July 1, and another surplus will accumulate this year if the legislature doesn't cut into it with additional appropriations. Revenues will slump because of tire rationing and possible gasoline rationing. The loss will be in the 5½ cent gasoline tax and the auto

IMAGE IS NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE DUE TO COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS.

A paper copy of this issue is available at call number LH 1 .06S6 in Bizzell Memorial Library.

Association Progress

license tax. The license tax on automobiles and farm trucks goes for common schools and one cent of the gasoline tax goes into the general fund, while the remainder is for roads. Offsetting the loss, there is an increase in the gross production tax, which may help solve the fiscal troubles.

Mr. Kerr doesn't have the legislative experience of Governor Phillips or W. H. Murray. He has more knowledge of the legislature than Marland had when the State Senate gained so much power. Mr. Kerr will rely upon his legislative leaders and advisers for aid with the legislature. His two brothers, A. M. Kerr, former legislator, and B. B. Kerr, a member of the legislature, will aid him. Mr. Kerr will draw on his own knowledge of men and business for handling the assembly and administering the affairs of state.

The nominee's plan now is for a recess of the legislature during the session, for a special election on constitutional amendments. Or the election could be held while the legislature is in session.

He tentatively plans to submit proposed constitutional amendments as follows:

1. Modification of the amendment creating the State Board of Regents for Higher Education to restore power of appropriation for institutions to the legislature, with the board having a limited power over expenditures and full power in co-ordination.

2. Amendments providing for separate boards of regents for Oklahoma A. and M. College and other agricultural colleges with members having staggered terms to take control from the governor. The colleges are now controlled by the State Board of Agriculture, whose members are appointed and removed at will by the governor.

3. A graduated land tax to apply to cultivated land only, on a basis that will promote and encourage home ownership of small family size farms and at the same time not penalize other home owning farmers or ranchers, or farmers in that section of the state where large acreage is an economic necessity.

4. Amendment to give women the right to hold major state offices including the governorship.

▲ ▲ ▲

Lt. (jg) Jack J. Berry, '28geol, formerly of Tulsa, went into active Navy service early this summer.

Lt. Sam P. Leeman, '41eng, is on duty with a bombardier squadron on the Pacific coast.

Victor Capper, '42, has been inducted into the Army as a volunteer officer candidate.

W. F. Birdsong, Jr., '31-'42, of Lawton, has enlisted in the Armored Forces of the Army.

Jack Marks, '40, was inducted into the Army July 26. He formerly was in the field service of the Office of Indian Affairs stationed at Hugo. Mrs. Marks is the former Elnore Reinhardt.

Donald Ishmael, '37-'39, is an ensign in the United States Naval Reserve.

Lt. Carl H. Tyler, '28, former member of the State Highway Patrol at Guthrie, has been promoted to captain in the 45th Division.

TED BEAIRD, '21ba, executive secretary of the Alumni Association and manager of the Oklahoma Memorial Union Building since 1936, was granted leave of absence for the duration of the war at a special meeting of the governing boards of the two organizations August 6, and left immediately for Miami Beach, Florida, to begin service as a captain in the United States Army Air Corps.

His first assignment was to the Officer Training School at Miami Beach.

The action was not entirely unexpected as Mr. Beaird had been interviewed by Army officials last spring and at the annual meeting of the Stadium-Union trustees and the Alumni Association executive board in June, both boards made provisions for granting leave of absence to any of the staff members of the two organizations who might be called to military service.

At the meeting August 6, the Board of Managers of the Union and a special committee from the alumni executive board granted the leave of absence to Mr. Beaird and appointed Roscoe Cate, '26ba, as acting manager of the Union and acting alumni secretary for the period of Mr. Beaird's absence. Mr. Cate has been editor-manager of the *Sooner Magazine* and assistant to Mr. Beaird since 1936.

Mr. Cate continues as editor-manager of *Sooner Magazine*, but Edith Walker, '41journ, was promoted from assistant editor to managing editor and will take a large part of the responsibility for the editorial side of the publication. Elaine Larecy, '42journ, formerly employed in the office of the Beech Aircraft Corporation at Wichita, Kansas, was added to the staff as assistant editor.

Another change in the Union organization came July 1 when Homer Heck, '35, resigned as part time manager of the Union in order to devote full time to his duties as director of WNAD, the University radio station.

Following the meeting at which Mr. Beaird was granted leave of absence, Elmer L. Fraker, '20ba, '38ma, of Mangum, president of the Alumni Association, issued the following statement:

"Ted Beaird has answered the call of his country. He is now a captain in the Air Forces of the United States Army. Graduates, undergraduates, faculty members, the administration of the University are going to miss the sincere and dynamic work of Ted. Though we are sorry to lose his services as executive secretary of the University Association, yet we are glad to know that in leaving us he answers a high call of duty to his country.

"Ted's orders calling him to the Air Forces came on short notice. But with his usual efficiency and drive, Ted got everything pertaining to his office shipshape within a few hurried days.

"The emergency council of the Association voted to give Ted a leave of absence for the period of time he might be in the armed services of the United States. When the war is over and peace returns to our land, Ted will once more take up his duties with the University of Oklahoma Association.

"Upon granting the leave of absence to Mr. Beaird, the committee turned its attention to the selection of his successor for the duration. It was a foregone conclusion that only one man could satisfactorily take over Ted's work at this time. That man was Roscoe Cate. Roscoe was unanimously selected to act as executive secretary of the Association until such time as Mr. Beaird might return. Mr. Cate has been closely associated with Mr. Beaird in association activities during the last six years. He is thoroughly acquainted with every phase of the work. Nation-wide recognition has come to him through his excellent editorship of the *Sooner Magazine*."

Breakfast at Dallas

Arrangements have been made for the annual O. U. alumni breakfast to be held in connection with the Sooner-Texas game at Dallas, which this year will be on October 10. The breakfast will be held at 10 o'clock Saturday morning, October 10, at the Hotel Adolphus.

Life Members Total 610

Four more alumni, two from California and two from Oklahoma, last month were added to the Life Membership roll, bringing the total number of living life members to 610.

It is notable that two of the new memberships were purchased as birthday gifts. One was presented to Arnold Court, '34ba, meteorologist in Los Angeles, by his parents, Professor N. A. Court, of the University mathematics faculty, and Mrs. Court. Mr. Arnold was meteorologist on Admiral Byrd's Antarctic Expedition and now is with the U. S. Weather Bureau.

The other gift life membership was purchased by Lauretta Mae Beaubien, '19 nurse, Nowata, as a birthday gift for herself.

Other new members are Ramona Russell, '41law, attorney in Picher, and C. A. Cooley, '17, who lives in Los Angeles.