

Sooner Sports

By HAROLD KEITH

Parrington, Owen, Jones.

Those are the three men who have had the biggest part in the building of football at the youngish University of Oklahoma whose fifty-second team risks annihilation against Army's formidable gridiron juggernaut September 30 at West Point.

A Harvard-trained, young Kansas savant who eventually was fired from the University faculty and later won the Pulitzer Prize for making the most significant contribution to American history, Dr. Vernon L. Parrington died in England in 1926. Bennie Owen, still healthy and active at 70, is director of intramural sports at Oklahoma. Colonel Lawrence "Biff" Jones, now Army's graduate manager of athletics, is the only one of the three who will probably see the Oklahoma-Army game.

Although Army partisans probably regard the game as only the beginning of another fine season against gradually stiffening opposition, Parrington and Owen would have enjoyed watching it for a different reason. Regardless of Army's margin of victory, they would see it as the triumphant culmination of all the countless difficulties and handicaps each encountered when he was building the sport at Norman back in the days when Oklahoma was a grassy Indian country freshly peopled by the various land runs. After 51 years of football at Norman, an Oklahoma team is at last playing the Nation's No. 1 college team in the East.

Although Jack Harts of Winfield, Kans., was the first Oklahoma football coach, Parrington was the father of football at Oklahoma. Engaged by Dr. David Ross Boyd, the young school's first president, to head and organize the first department of English, the 26-year-old Parrington also coached the University football team from 1897 through 1900.

And he was statistically the most successful coach the University has ever had. His teams won 13 and lost two games for a percentage of .818, still the highest of any coach in the University's history.

Parrington's contributions to the sport at Norman included, besides his coaching and managing and officiating, the transplantation of the new game's Eastern atmosphere and accoutrements to the poverty-handicapped little school in far-off Oklahoma—the organized cheering, the dance for the visiting team after the game and the opportunity it afforded for friendly fellowship with the opponents, and his lucid, colorful stories of the University's early games in the "Umpire," the University's magazine he founded in 1897. Everything Parrington touched he vitalized.

Bennie Owen, who quarterbacked Fielding H. Yost's all-victorious Kansas club of 1899, became Oklahoma's coach in 1905. That took a lot of courage. The University athletic association was in debt and still owed the two previous coaches portions of their promised salaries. There was very little material in Oklahoma Territory because there were so few four-year high schools. The first three years Owen coached only during the three fall months, operating a restaurant at Arkansas City and accepting IOU's on his football salary from the impoverished Oklahoma athletic association.

Owen was a builder and a dreamer. He was long on vision. He knew Oklahoma would eventually be granted statehood and that the University would grow. 1907 was his toughest year. That was the year Owen lost his right arm in a hunting accident, the University's main building burned and Charles N. Haskell, first governor of the new state of Oklahoma, summarily discharged President Boyd, Professor Parrington and nearly a score of the old faculty. After that it was a breeze. Owen laughed off those setbacks and began to build great football teams at Norman where he coached 22 years.



Dr. Ellsworth Collings, University of Oklahoma education professor, has received a hand-made miniature buckboard which was carved by L. S. (Tex) Cross, Los Angeles, California. Cross was a cowboy on Texas ranches 65 years ago. The buckboard is complete with long springs, double-trees, neck-yoke and slatted wagonbed.

Annual Report of O. U. Alumni Club of Washington, D. C.

The University of Oklahoma Alumni Club of Washington, D. C., with 50 paid members, has completed a very active year. A banquet, two business meetings and six luncheons have been held.

The year's activity began with a meeting of members on September 24 at the Cosmos Club for the planning of the fall dinner in honor of President Cross. Guy Woodward, '20, was appointed general chairman of arrangements.

The dinner, held November 16 in Pierce Hall, drew an attendance of 131 persons. President Cross made the principal speech, describing the current situation at the University. Harrington Wimberly, '24ba, then newly arrived in Washington as a member of the Federal Power Commission, also spoke. Thirty-five former Sooners joined the club during the evening.

A series of informal luncheons at the Hay-Adams Hotel was started December 4 and continued through May, on the first Tuesday of each month. Mrs. Lynden Manner, '34cd, was chairman of arrangements for all. Attendance has averaged about 12.

A meeting of members of the club was held March 26 in the Cosmos Club to honor Dr. Royden

Dangerfield, administrative assistant to the University president, and for the annual election. Dr. Dangerfield spoke to the group, emphasizing the changes that have occurred at the University since hundreds of veterans have enrolled. Fifteen members were present. Dr. Elgin Groseclose, '20ba, was re-elected president, Dr. Walter Emery, '34law, was re-elected vice president, Miss Frances Hunt, '29ba, who has served as secretary and treasurer for the past year, was re-elected secretary, and Mrs. Lynden Manner was chosen treasurer.

This year for the first time the club has maintained a card file of names and addresses of all O. U. people in Washington and surrounding suburbs. This file was built up from names supplied last fall by the alumni office at Norman. Every effort is made to keep it up to date, and the secretary is often called on to supply addresses and phone numbers to Sooners who wish to get in touch with their old friends. Last fall the list included about 500 names, however many of these alumni have now left Washington.

His success was phenomenal. His 1908 team lost only one game, his 1910 team lost but two, his 1911 team was all-victorious, his 1913 team lost two, his 1914 team lost one, his 1915 and 1918 teams were all-victorious and his 1920 club was undefeated. Owen's Oklahoma teams were known for their speed, their forward-passing, their clean play and their fine sportsmanship.

Owen made three important tactical contributions to the game. In 1910 he began using the direct pass for every play in his repertoire. A year later he pioneered extensive running and passing off long punt formation. In 1914 and 1915 he became the first coach in America to go in for mass production of aerial play. With Fullback Spot Geyer sensationally pegging the old round ball of the times, Oklahoma made the forward pass a major unit of offense in every game on the schedule with the forward passing yardage often surpassing the running yardage. This was the premise adopted with the new streamlined ball nearly a quarter of a century later by Texas Christian, Arkansas and Tulsa, but Owen's Oklahoma teams of 1914 and 1915 were the pioneers.

In 1935 Oklahoma's football situation was run down at the heels. The Sooners were on the threshold of expansion but a strong, vigorous hand was needed to reconstruct Oklahoma football along modern blueprints.

Lloyd Noble, shrewd Ardmore oil man and a member of the University regents, went to Louisiana State University whose big, gruff, forthright football coach, Capt. Biff Jones, formerly of Army, had just booted Governor Huey Long out of his dressing room when the Kingfish essayed to make a speech between halves, then had thrown the job back in Long's lap. Noble persuaded Jones to come to Oklahoma.

Jones' Oklahoma achievement was his rejuvenation of the entire Oklahoma set-up. After the depression of the early 1930's, the athletic plant was run down and reform was badly needed in all departments. Captain Jones was facing the busiest job of his life with much the least to work with.

His face puckered into a busy scowl, Jones tackled it. He first showed he was a great athletic director. Finances, equipment, personnel—he established them all on a sound business-like basis. He rebuilt the training department, adding diatherms, whirlpool baths, needle showers. He brought Pete Dempsey, an Irish sergeant who talked with a thick brogue, to Norman organized an athletic equipment department that saved thousands of dollars annually. With the help of King Price, his assistant director, a new paved highway from Norman to Oklahoma City and special trains were secured. He toured the state to meet alumni groups.

Captain Jones then turned his attention to the players. At first they stood in awe of him. Wasn't he the hard-boiled guy who defied Huey Long? Then they got to know him and discovered he was plain, honest, knew football from the ground up and never played an injured man. His Sooners of 1935 and 1936 lost only six of 18 games.

Then came the war department's decree taking him away from Norman. Oklahoma had lost Biff Jones but she still inherited the excellent stone from the firm football foundation he built, and she capitalized upon it during the later coaching regimes of Tom Stidham and Dewey "Snorter" Luster.

Press Winner Named

High schools receiving first places in the annual newspaper publication contest of the Oklahoma Interscholastic Press Association were Tulsa, Ponca City, Bartlesville College-High, Antlers, Okmulgee, Bartlesville Central, Chickasha, Midwest City and Oklahoma City Taft. Forty-two schools entered the contest which was judged by University of Oklahoma journalism faculty members.



ROBERT B. CURRAN

Curran Now an Oil Executive

Robert B. Curran, 33bs, manager of the Carter's Northwest Division, was named a director of the company on April 12, it has been announced by President O. C. Schorp.

One of the youngest Carter employees in a major executive post, Mr. Curran, 37, has made a rapid rise in the oil industry, and his election to the board of directors is a tribute to his ability and past achievements.

Born in Tulsa March 6, 1909, Mr. Curran later

attended public schools in the Oil Capital City. Following graduation from the University with a degree in geology he went to work for the Carter that same year in the geological department at Seminole. Later he became production geologist there.

In 1935 Mr. Curran was transferred to the scouting division and in 1938 was made chief scout. He became head of the scouting and statistical division three years later. In March, 1943, he was appointed assistant to the president, a position which he held for a year and a half.

Following the Carter's broad expansion in the Northwest Division, Mr. Curran was transferred to Billings, Montana, in September, 1944, as assistant division manager. While his college training and early experience had been primarily devoted to the exploration and production phases of the oil industry, his new duties in the Northwest embraced also the company's refining and marketing activities in that region.

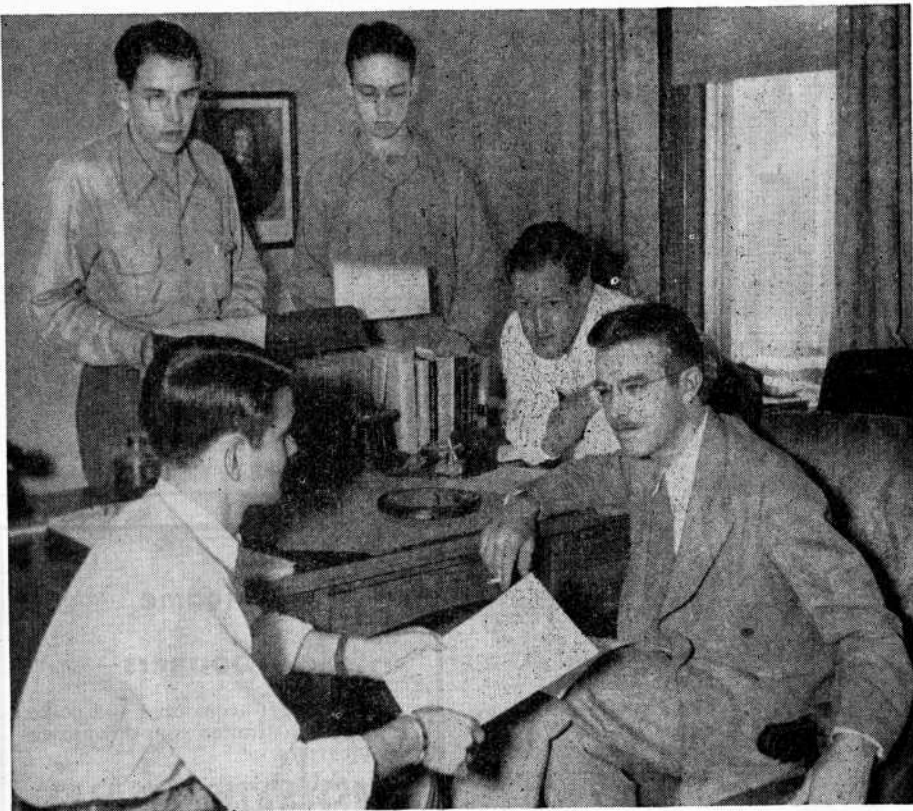
After six months in the Northwest, he was named division manager in February, 1945, and he has served in that capacity ever since.

Widely known among oil industry executives as "Bob," the new Carter director is friendly, enthusiastic, conscientious, and capable.

Few executives in the petroleum industry have climbed from a routine oil field job to the board of directors of a major company in such a short time.

1,500 Work on WNAD Programs

Fifteen hundred persons took part in radio programs broadcast by University of Oklahoma station WNAD during the spring school semester, Director John W. Dunn reported. In the group were 139 faculty members who broadcast only 20 percent of the WNAD programs. Operating on a frequency of 640 kilocycles, WNAD covers almost all of Oklahoma with news, music and educational programs 12 hours each day.



Dr. Kester Svendsen, professor of English and housemaster of Franklin House, gives advice to freshman Jack Wilson (foreground). Paying close attention are (left to right) fellow freshmen Kenneth Smock, Robert E. Bowling and O. E. Scull.



Marion Donehew at 14 when he entered O. U. in 1892 as the first student.

O.U. Student Number One

Number one, that's it! Number one meaning the first student to enrol in the University of Oklahoma, Dr. Marion Donehew, now residing at Stratford, Oklahoma. Recently his young daughter, Lorene (fourth grade, 14 years of age), wrote the

Lorene (fourth grade, 14 years of age), wrote the Alumni Office in part, "would you like a photograph of my father, Marion Donehew, the first student to enrol in O. U. in 1892, as he looked when he enrolled at 14 years of age in 1892 and as he looks today?"



LORENE DONEHEW Immediately upon receipt of the note from Miss Lorene, the News Staff of Sooner Magazine advised we would like the two photographs of the first student to enrol in the University of Oklahoma along with her picture. After the exchange of correspondence, the pictures were received, and

in the late fall of 1891 about nine months before I enrolled in the University of Oklahoma, September, 1892. G. C. Baum was the photographer. The clothes that I was wearing were provided for me by my parents in outfitting me to attend the Baylor University at Waco, Texas, with my favorite teacher, Dayton B. Steed, who afterwards was County Judge of Grayson County Texas, for many years.



DR. DONEHEW Health conditions along the Brazos River in the vicinity of Waco caused my parents to cancel the arrangements for my attendance at Baylor during the summer of 1891. I wore these clothes minus the old

style detachable shirt cuffs as shown in picture during my first attendance at the Oklahoma University. There was very little change in my appearance between the date of the picture and the opening date of the University. I did not attend any more public schools after April, 1891. We moved from Texas to Oklahoma in the Spring of 1892, leaving Whitesboro, Texas, March 13, and was snowbound at Ardmore March 10, 1892, during that historic snow storm and blizzard.

"My father filed on a claim near where McLoud is now. My parents became interested in the educational possibilities that the opening of the University would bring, and moved to Norman in July, 1892. My father and I hauled some of the material and brick used in the construction of the first University building. We formed an early friendship with Dr. David R. Boyd, and the rest of the faculty, and when the opening day came, my mother and I were there promptly, and I took my examination for entrance. She and I did not know that I was the first to enrol until I passed and received the congratulations of the entire faculty for the honor of being the first student to enrol in the University of Oklahoma. The examination and enrollment were in the upstairs, northwest room of the old rock building, that is known as the first home of the University."

Discharges

- ▶ Discharges from military service were received recently by Robert Spurlock, '40-'41, Norman; Charles Daniel Hille, '41ba, Tulsa; Ralph Merkle, '41eng, Fort Stockton, Texas; Joe S. Rockwood, '32ed, '37law, Sapulpa, and Gervase D. Spradlin, '41ed, Pauls Valley.
- ▶ Lt. Col. Joe Stamper, '33ba, '35law, Antlers, is now on terminal leave from the Army.
- ▶ Howard G. Stanley, '44-'45, Marshall, Michigan, was discharged from the Navy.
- ▶ George Steckel, '43ba, Wetumka, recently received his discharge from military service.
- ▶ Tech. Sgt. Leroy E. Stewart, '37ba, '38ma, and Pfc. Elton G. Davis, '41-'42, both of Norman, were discharged from the Army at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, March 14.
- ▶ Maj. Charles Storms, '42bus, Ponca City, is now on terminal leave after returning recently from Frankfurt, Germany, where he has been stationed for the last 14 months. He has been in the service for the last four years.
- ▶ Jack Strong, '41-'43, Okemah, received his discharge from the Army at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, February 25 after three years' service.
- ▶ Lt. Col. Hirst B. Suffield, '34ba, Gage, has returned to the States after serving 18 months in the European theater of operations. His terminal leave expired March 17.

- ▶ Staff Sgt. Fletcher Blake Swank, Jr., '37journal, Norman, has been discharged from service after 40 months. He served in the Asiatic-Pacific theater of operations.
- ▶ J. B. Sweeting, '45, Westmoreland, New York, was discharged February 1 from the Navy after serving as an ensign aboard a destroyer.
- ▶ John E. Turnbull, '41-'43, Norman, received his discharge from the Army March 5. Mr. Turnbull had served with the infantry in the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe.
- ▶ Flight Officer Charles Turner, '43, recently was discharged from military service.
- ▶ First Lt. James D. Wallace, '38-'40, Oklahoma City, was discharged from the Army Air Corps in November.
- ▶ Lt. Homer A. Weeks, '27ms, Norman, has been placed on inactive status in Miami, Florida.
- ▶ Sgt. Leland W. West, '37-'38, Norman, was discharged from the Army Air Force January 18 after 41 months in the service.
- ▶ Lt. Col. W. W. Whiteman, Jr., '36ba, '37law, '40bus, Oklahoma City, received his discharge from the Army in November following five years in the service.
- ▶ Reginald Williams, '31ba, '32ma, '42law, Oklahoma City, and Ron W. Woodhouse, '35-'36, Sacramento, California, have been discharged from the armed forces.
- ▶ Three former University students who recently were discharged from military service were M. L. Willis, '42pharm, Altus, and Ellis Liebman, '30bus, Frederick.
- ▶ Lt. (j.g.) Robert E. Wolfard, '40-'42, Norman, has been transferred from inactive status to duty as an instructor at Todd Field, Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas. Lieutenant Wolfard returned from the Pacific in December and was released to inactive duty.
- ▶ W. C. Woodward, '42zool, Oklahoma City, recently received his discharge from military service.
- ▶ Col. Elwood Wright, '34pharm, '35m.pharm, Elk City, received his discharge from the Army March 11. He was overseas for 20 months in the New Guinea, Leyte, and Philippine invasions. His corps was among the first to enter Japan for occupation duties.
- ▶ James Neil Yowell, '42, Norman; Thomas Hickman Wilson, Jr., '40ma, Seattle, Washington; O. L. Williams, '28-'31, Elk City, and Thomas George White, '44, Sulphur, are a few of the former students who have been discharged recently.

Hal Muldrow, Jr.

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